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LANDSMAAL AND THE LANGUAGE MOVEMENT IN NORWAY*

The Viking Age and the following two centuries developed in Norway and Iceland a rich and beautiful language, a highly idiomatic native speech, free from Greek and Latin contamination in the matter of syntax. This language had its primary home in southwestern Norway. It is on the living dialects of the same promising linguistic regions that the modern Norwegian *Landsmaal*, the new speech of Norway, is built.

The old classical language of Norway and Iceland became, as we all know, the bearer of a rich, varied, and strikingly original literature. I shall merely mention the two Eddas, the Icelandic sagas, *Heimskringla* and the *Konungs Skuggsjá*.

Norway had her period of strength and greatness followed by one of almost unparalleled decline and calamities. Civil wars followed close upon one another. In place of the raids and expeditions into foreign lands for purposes of conquest or peaceful settlement, the descendants of the vikings fell to killing one another with an earnestness worthy of a better cause. From 1130 to 1240 Norwegian history is but a record of warring factions and intrigues of claimants to the throne.

This led ultimately to a decided weakening of Norway's most important class of citizens, the peasant nobles—I mean the proud, independent, headstrong Norwegian freeholders. The severe monarchy built up by King Sverre and his successors also tended in the same direction. In the midst of it all came the Black Death. This scourge appeared in Bergen in the year 1347 and spread rapidly through the adjacent country, depopulating whole districts. Denmark and Sweden also were affected, but these countries were able to recuperate in a comparatively short time. It is humiliating for us to review this period of our country's history. Norway, to use a figure, lay as a tempest-tossed vessel, storm-battered, rigging down, rudder lost, seams leaking—a veritable wreck at the mercy of wind and wave.

* For a bibliography on the linguistic situation in Norway see Publications of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study I, Nr. 4, where also a third type of *Landsmaal* is analyzed.

The union with Sweden lasted from 1319 to 1371. The linguistic center shifted from western to Eastern Norway and the border districts, that is, to the districts which by natural, native development were most closely related to Denmark and Sweden. For some time Swedish became fashionable among the higher classes in Norway, and Norwegians endeavored to learn to write the language. Of course the old classical language of Norway suffered by consequence. (See Noreen's *Altisländische und Altnorwegische Grammatik*. Halle, 1903, p. 13.

In the year 1380 came the union with Denmark, our plunge into more than Egyptian darkness. Our forefathers had run the ship of state on the rocks, and not a few of them seemed perfectly willing to dispose of the wreck to the highest bidder. The union with Denmark is the blot on the pages of Norway's history. It is the period of national shame and degradation, of ignorance, and general impoverishment, the decay of the native speech and the intrusion of a foreign tongue, the Danish. The feeling of nationality in the hearts of the Norwegians became well-nigh extinguished. People lost their sense of self-reliance, yes, almost the desire to be themselves. No able leaders appeared to save the land from bondage. Denmark drained the country of money and men. Danish kings pawned Norwegian islands in the Western seas; in quarrels with Sweden they lost the provinces of Baahuslän, Herjedalen, and Jämteland—all of them Norwegian territory. The Danish officials plundered churches, desecrated shrines, extorted possible and impossible things from the Norwegian peasants. And in return Denmark gave to Norway the Danish language!

The old Norwegian language ceased little by little to be used by the people in the cities and, as Norway's leading families died out or intermarried with Swedes and Danes, sank to the level of a number of country dialects. Danish became the language of fashion even as it became the language of the administration and, ere long, of the church.

It must be stated here, however, that Danish was not forced upon the Norwegians by the Danes, but Danish came in gradually to take the place of the retreating Norwegian language.

When Danish preachers at the time of the Reformation came to convert the Norwegians to the Lutheran faith, there was no longer a fully unified Norwegian speech which could be used in a Bible translation. Had there been any such language easily available, the Bible would no doubt have been translated into it. Iceland, on the other hand, which was likewise converted from Catholicism by Danes, was given an Icelandic translation. There was no longer a uniform Norwegian language to stem the Danish tide.

Danish became the official language of Norway in the year 1450. The last Bishop to use Norwegian was Gaute Ivarsson, who died in 1510. His successor was the Dane, Erik Valkendorf, and then the language of the church became fully Danish. The last persons to give up Norwegian, excepting, of course, the peasants, were the lawmen, for the laws were written in this language, and laws are adverse to violent changes in terminology and tradition.

One may perhaps be tempted to ask the question, how, in the light of this long sojourn of Danish in Norway, can there be any Norwegian language left at all? The answer is: the ruling class in church and state formed, as it were, a clique—a nation within a nation. Many of these officials were Danes or of other foreign origin. The peasants were looked upon as barbarians; the leading classes would have nothing to do with them. No intimate relation existed or could exist between the peasantry on the one hand and the professional classes and dwellers in the cities on the other. Of the peasantry only the men had direct dealings with Danish-speaking merchant, priest and judge. This left the women in the country districts almost entirely outside the pale of Danish influence. And the women of course reared the children and taught them the language as they knew it, that is, taught them Norwegian in the form of the local country dialect. The Norwegian common schools of later days naturally have tended to corrupt Norwegian by the use of Danish Bible History, Hymnal, and A. B. C., but the effect has not been so harmful as it might have been had the schools been well organized from the first. What country schools there were used, for the greater part until quite recently, local teachers, men of the people, who spoke

the local dialect in the school room. It is fortunate therefore, from the point of view of the language, that popular education was so well neglected during the years of the union with Denmark, for had a strong educational system been in operation in city and country, mountain and glen, the Norwegian speech would have been wiped out everywhere even as it has been almost totally in the larger cities. Our national linguistic regeneration would then have become an impossibility.

However, Danish proved to be unable to destroy the Norwegian peasant dialects, but at the same time no Norwegian dialect had the opportunity, under the conditions of the time, to rise to the rank of a standard language. These dialects are yet today strong and fully living, though to some extent influenced by Danish. Some work in recording the native speech of Norway was done quite early, but only in a sporadic and unsystematic way. The first popular ballads were reduced to writing about 1640. Some Norwegian dialects produced somewhat of a literature in ballads and the like. Peter Dass, born in 1647, incorporated some things from Nordland dialects in his poems, but there was no conscious effort on the part of anyone to create a distinct Norwegian language. People had not yet come to a clear realization of the relation between the Norwegian peasant dialects and the language used by the Danish administration and by the cultured classes in Norway in general.

In 1772 was formed in Copenhagen, *Det norske Selskab*, a society of Norwegian students and literary men. As in the early days of the Viking Age, Norwegians from the different parts of Norway had met in foreign lands and fought side by side against a common foe, and in this co-operation created and strengthened the national feeling, so now Norwegians, meeting in the Danish capital, began to feel as brothers and as strangers in a strange land. Norway was waking out of its stupor. These young men began to feel that they were Norwegians and not Danes. Even before the separation from Denmark came a demand for a Norwegian university. As we know, the Danish king saw himself forced to yield, and in 1811 the University was granted. Two years later the modest little provincial university began its scholastic career.

Then came 1814, the historic year in the annals of Modern Norway. Denmark was forced to give Norway over to Sweden in the early part of that year. The Swedes unintentionally did us a great service when they forced us out of the union with Denmark. But to be given over to Sweden, that is, to Norway's traditional enemy, was too much even for long-suffering Norway. The war broke out, the outcome of which was that Norway secured for herself one of the world's freest constitutions, which constitution the king of Sweden accepted in the main on becoming joint king of Norway and Sweden. Long disputes followed, lasting almost a century. Sweden endeavored to make the union closer, but Norway opposed such moves. In all this the Norwegian national feeling was tested and trained as never before. Then came 1905, our crowning year politically. Norway has reached her goal: a free country with a descendant of Harold the Fairhaired on the throne!

But the awakening national feeling in Norway manifested itself in more ways than in the purely political. In some quarters appeared a more or less clearly defined desire for independence in other matters. It is the language, however, which chiefly concerns us here. The constitution of 1814 speaks very naïvely of Danish as Norwegian and demands among other things that the joint king of Norway and Sweden shall use Norwegian in his acts and documents pertaining to Norway. I have read some of these documents by the late Oscar II. They are written in Danish words with heavy German sentence structure. And yet it is called Norwegian!

The most important among the early language reformers in Norway was the poet, Wergeland. He had however no definite program. He was groping in the dark. He lacked the scientific and linguistic prerequisites for any far-reaching, well-planned reform. He voiced our awakening longing for cultural independence and maturity, and he prophesied that before the end of the century we should have a national language. His prophesy has not come true as yet, even though we passed the mile-stone of the century years ago. But there has been progress. In an article written in 1835, Wergeland advocated the use of certain native words in place of the

corresponding Danish. He wrote some dialect poems himself. Much of what he did was good, much in rather bad taste. His work after all was only patchwork, somewhat like the work of K. Knudsen later in the interests of the *Riksmaal*.

Wergeland was of course not allowed to go on in peace in his work of Norwegianizing Danish as much as possible. He was bitterly opposed by the linguistic standpatters and self-appointed, self-anointed judges of taste. Welhaven was their chief spokesman. Johan Sverdrup said of him that if Welhaven could have had his way, the Norwegian lyre would not have had a single native string. Welhaven, with many more of his kind, drew his inspiration chiefly from literary Copenhagen, and he often felt his life in Norway a Babylonian captivity. He found the Norwegian peasants rough and untutored. So they undoubtedly were in many cases, but surely only by the fault of Welhaven, and others before him, who had neglected their traditions and their native language, to feed fat at the festal boards of the Danish capital.

The next big moment in the linguistic and cultural regeneration of Norway came with Jørgen Moe and Asbjørnsen. Perhaps I should rather use the word "emancipation" than "regeneration," for what was needed was to free the Norwegian spirit from the foreign yoke in order to enable Norway to reveal to the world its own treasures and resources. Moe and Asbjørnsen gave us our own Norwegian fairy tales. I do not mean fairy tales that necessarily originated in Norway. No, stories that bore the stamp of the Norwegian temperament, of our way of interpreting life and the world, our way of saying apt things in terse, aphoristic form. These fairy tales are delightfully Norwegian in spirit. We find the quick, straightforward presentation; short, snappy sentences; sly, unobtrusive humor; apt sayings, and the hard-headed sense of reality that belong to the best peasants. The only fault that some of us find with these stories by Asbjørnsen and Moe is that the language is too Danish. It seems very Norwegian to some who live in the cities and for whom Danish has become rather largely the mother tongue. But to those who speak a real Norwegian dialect, these stories are in the matter of language only too often quite un-Norwegian. We, then, who learned Norwegian

in our childhood homes, are glad to see that so many good Norwegian words have been adopted in the language of these stories; but we are grieved to see them for the greater part thus translated into Danish and sent out among the Norwegians. One thing must be granted, the spirit of the language as well as the mode of presentation is thoroughly Norwegian.

In reality it was a great step forward toward things Norwegian that these men took. But it is not to be supposed that they were not criticized for going so far in the use of words that were not Danish! Harsh criticisms were bestowed upon them here and there because the language was not pure enough, that is, not Danish enough. To illustrate how zealous some Norwegians were to keep their Danish language pure, I will mention Lyder Sagen, (1777-1850). This teacher in Bergen struck out ruthlessly whatever Norwegian idioms and words appeared in the written work of his pupils. Or there is the case of Landstad, the celebrated maker of our hymnal, *Landstads Salmebog*. When Landstad had adapted some Danish hymns, translated a number of German ones, and written some very beautiful hymns himself, a commission was appointed to examine the book. Landstad had used words like *tagde*, and "I denne søde Juletid *tarv* man sig ret fornøie." He was compelled to strike out *tarv*, "ought, has reason to," and write *tör*, "to dare." This change destroyed the meaning of course. Landstad intended, "In this blessed Christmas time one has abundant reason to rejoice," or "one ought to rejoice." In the changed version the sentence means "In this blessed Christmas time one *dares* rejoice"! But *tarv* was too Norwegian for the commission. Landstad answered not without some heat: "We ought to be ashamed to be more hard to suit than is the Lord himself who has given each people its language. He is no more offended by a Norwegian word in His holy house than by a coat of honest homespun. It is possible to mock at all things, but this ought not to be so. One ought to be careful not to make sport of a people that has sustained the loss of a grand mother tongue with its wonderful literature, a language that is fully on a par with any other language whatsoever both in beauty and

richness and power of development, he reviles the people who makes light of the mother tongue." (See, Lars Eske-land—*Norsk Salmesong*, Oslo 1904, p. 10 ff.). This is the way Landstad felt about Norwegian, he who had been educated in Danish in common school and university. The commission made him change *makk*, 'worm,' to *orm*, which to a Norwegian means 'serpent.' He protested, but the commission held that the Norwegian word *makk* was too simple, too vulgar, too Norwegian, to be given a place in the church language of Norway. The hymnal was finally adopted after eight years of toning down and elimination of Norwegian words and idioms. The same year, 1869, in which the timid purists permitted Landstad's hymnal to pass, appeared by a strange coincidence *Nokre Salmar* by Blix—in *Landsmaal*! Old Landstad was right glad to see them.

And now let us turn to one of Norway's greatest men, poet, philologist, language reformer, patriot,—I mean Ivar Aasen. Ivar was born in 1813, the son of a peasant. The farm, Aasen, from which the surname is derived, lies in Søndmøre in Western Norway in the heart of the best Norwegian language region. Aasen had little formal schooling. He is a splendid example of what unswerving purpose, genius, and self-education can do. Language interested Aasen profoundly. Grammar was simply poetry to him. First he studied foreign languages somewhat; then he tried to get some fundamental knowledge of Scandinavian from existing Danish grammars. But as these grammars did not go far, he found it necessary to set to work for himself. He studied old Norse as a matter of course and also old Swedish. He investigated his own Søndmøre dialect and published a study of it in 1851 under the title *Søndmørsk Grammatik*. He came in due time to Bergen in order to show his work to the bishop. The bishop introduced him to Sophus Bugge, who happened to be in the city at that time. It did not take Bugge long to realize that he was face to face with a philological genius. Bugge helped Aasen to get financial aid to travel throughout Norway for the purpose of collecting dialect material. In 1848 appeared *Det norske Folkesprogs*

Grammatik. In 1850 Aasen published his *Ordbog over det norske Folkesprog*.

In doing all this work Aasen made a great discovery, or at least confirmed what may have been a mere surmise in his mind. It was generally held that Danish had completely driven out the Norwegian language, that the apparently rude and uncouth country dialects were mere corruptions of the noble speech of Denmark and of the speech of the cultured classes in Norway. Aasen soon found abundant proof to the contrary, proof that he was not dealing with corrupt Danish *patois* but with the healthy, vigorous direct descendants of the old language of Norway. He found that a great many of the Norwegians had never spoken Danish, never! These dialects were far from being as impoverished as was thought by the "cultured" of the cities. They were far from dissolution, these dialects, but perfectly healthy and sound. And when is a dialect or language sound and healthy? I should say, when it is able to form new words out of its own elements to meet whatever needs may arise, or is able to assimilate and make its own, whatever it may find necessary to borrow. These Norwegian dialects treat Danish as a distinctly foreign language. A Danish word has mental quotation marks around it when used in a Norwegian sentence. This is the way my dialect of Tysnæs treats Danish. These dialects retain to a remarkable degree the choice idioms and words of our ancient classical language. The statement is made by Aasen that in one part or another of Norway is found well-nigh all the words of the old Norse vocabulary. We have often found dialect words that have given us precious hints and aids in the interpretation of difficult passages of the Elder Edda. These dialects have, some of them, been more nobly conservative in the matter of phonology than has Icelandic, though they fall far below in the matter of the conservation of inflectional forms.

Here were rich dialects agreeing with one another in the main both as regards grammar and vocabulary, but lacking a central, unifying norm, a standard language to which they could furnish material and which in turn could keep them from running riot in the matter of individual development.

This large uniformity in the essentials of the various Norwegian dialects led Aasen to do a thing which has divided more than one household in Norway and turned mother against daughter and father against son. As the Primitive Germanic language had been scientifically reconstructed from converging lines of evidence, so Aasen set about to construct a central language out of the richest and most distinctly Norwegian dialects, that is, out of the dialects of Western Norway. With one difference, however, Aasen's language is made up, in its essentials, of real living forms, whereas the old Primitive Germanic has whole constellations of "starry" forms.

When Aasen had evolved his language, which is essentially normalized West Norwegian, he set about to write poems and sketches in this language to show its powers and possibilities. He gave us *Heimsyn*, a series of essays in which he treats the heavenly bodies, the air and climate, continents, life on earth, etc. The language is terse, pliable, rich, vital. (*See, Aasen—Skrifter i Samling*, Vol. II, 1912, 221ff.) It so happened that Ivar Aasen was not only a philological genius of the highest order, but a sincere patriot and a charming lyric poet as well. Some of his poems in *Landsmaal* belong to the finest ever written by a Norwegian. Some of his songs and charming lyrics are known and loved in every home in Norway, no matter what the occupants may think of Aasen's *Landsmaal*. Ivar had, moreover, the gift of making excellent definitions in his dictionaries, for saying striking things in defense of his language. He avoids invective and abuse. His presentation is calm, large and scholarly. He speaks with authority for he has earned the right by painstaking, careful study. He has great powers of generalization and can always master a mass of details by a powerful, shaping mind. The Norwegian dialects appeared to all a veritable chaos, but Aasen's creative mind turned them into a speech so truly Norwegian that we who have never spoken Danish find our own dialects vindicated, chastised and ennobled in Aasen's wonderful language. We accept unreservedly all that he has done and honor him as we can scarcely honor any other Norwegian. But however cool and calm the language discussions of Aasen are, one feels that below the surface there

is a current of strong feeling. Aasen realizes keenly Norway's greatest shame, the use of the Danish language! (See, Aasen, *Skrifter i Samling*, 3 vol. Chr. 1912.)

Aasen soon found enthusiastic helpers. The Norwegian national feeling was awakening and to the extent that it was awake it approved Aasen's work. It has often been charged by the opponents of Aasen's language reform that the partisans of *Landsmaal* are merely a few faddists, and that their work is not supported by the Norwegian national feeling. If that charge had been true, how can one suppose that this language, starting as it did with apparently everything against it except its own just cause, could in a few short years have fought itself to a place of legal equality with Dano-Norwegian, which latter language has been in official use in Norway since 1450? There are many staunch defenders of *Landsmaal* who in speech and writing use Danish because that was the language taught them in the school. There are members in the Storting who, in debates on the language question, have deplored the fact that Dano-Norwegian is the only language they master, but who say most emphatically that their children shall be given the opportunity to learn Norwegian. C. Bruun, for a number of years co-editor of *For Kirke og Kultur* has fought many a splendid battle for *Landsmaal*, but he always wrote in Danish. Once someone sneeringly remarked, "You serve your cause, you do; write fervid articles in favor of *Landsmaal* but write in Danish!" "But," said Bruun, "watch the students that come from the school in which I taught. You will find that they will both advocate and use *Landsmaal*."

Now, Danish was by many, even in the early fifties of the last century, felt to be our most disgraceful badge of servitude. There were men who hated Danish with a large, sincere and splendid hatred. But what could they do before the great work of Aasen had been accomplished? On the one side was Danish firmly entrenched in church, in state, in school, and among the educated classes in general; on the other side were a great many country dialects very much alive but rather undisciplined. The malcontents had grumbled—in Danish. Aasen, however, now offered a means of salvation.

Here was a language—made by one man if you like¹—but yet a language which was certainly not Danish, and which was much nearer to most of the Norwegian dialects than was the official Danish. A language rich in musical effect, was this *Landsmaal*. Danish has leveled under *e* well-nigh all the vowels of its older inflectional endings. Danish is consequently the least musically capable of the Scandinavian languages. With it compare the beauty of Swedish. Read, for instance, *Axel* by Tegner and glory in the melody thereof, then turn to any Danish poet and note the difference, and the endless succession of *e*'s; e. g.: *Og glemme stövets usle Frugt herveden*. Colorless, dull, and gray appears this language in comparison with Swedish, with the Norwegian dialects, or with *Landsmaal*. *Landsmaal* has nearly the richness and beauty of Swedish as far as the endings of the words are concerned, and it surpasses Swedish in having kept the diphthongal series *au*, *öy*, *ei* in the root syllables.

Among the early writers in *Landsmaal* may be mentioned, in addition to Aasen, Vinje, Fjörtoft, and Janson. Aasen's work as a language student and as a collector of dialect material had at first been received with enthusiasm and favor in all circles. But as soon as the majority of the cultured became aware of Aasen's enlarging plan and purpose, and noticed that he was beginning to have a following, the opposition arose. At first these apostles of good taste had been charmed by Aasen's simple country songs written in what appeared to them some peasant dialect, but when Aasen began to plan and advocate a more far-reaching and serious use of the *Landsmaal*, these men laughed condescendingly at what they considered Aasen's linguistic experiments, or scornfully dismissed the whole matter. Think, these men said, set a man-made paper-language, a rude peasant speech, an uncouth West Norwegian jargon, by the side of, or in the place of, Danish!

But *Landsmaal* was not a fad, hence it could not be howled down or laughed into silence. It was a profound and serious expression of the Norwegian will to live. Even its opponents today agree with it in its aim: a truly national language for

¹Cp. Luther's work in German.

Norway. The difference of opinion comes in the choice of means to the desired end.

Landsmaal, however, gathered momentum. The Norwegian satirist and poet, Vinje, joined the movement after much deliberation and many a struggle. One can scarcely realize what it means to quit the official language of the land and take up one that is new and despised among the rich and influential. But Vinje took the step because he loved Norway and because he found in *Landsmaal* more of his mother's language and that of his own heart. As we know, he was a peasant-born man. Vinje began to publish in 1858 the famous *Dölen* (Valley-dweller, the man from the glen). This gave the *Landsmaal* men their organ. In this paper, Vinje used *Landsmaal* of course, however, not always according to Aasen's norm, but at times nearer his own Midland dialect of Telemarken, and at times nearer that of Eastern Norway. He wanted to be free to experiment in order to find the form that could unite most of Norway; the form that could embody most of the living dialects. He used, e. g.: *boki*, the book—later *boka*, the East Norwegian form. But however much he fluctuated, and part of this fluctuation was a psychological necessity with him regardless of language—he always moved within true Norwegian limits.

Finally we come to Arne Garborg, born 1851, who joined the *Landsmaal* movement at the age of twenty-seven. He was already becoming known as a writer of Danish-Norwegian. But while Ibsen sneered at the poor, struggling *Landsmaal* and Bjørnson blustered in provincial Danish, Garborg sat down and taught himself *Landsmaal*, that is, cast his lot with the despised patriots who were endeavoring to make the Norwegians wake up to the necessity of greater cultural independence. He was a most valuable addition to the ranks. His Danish and his *Landsmaal* are both admirable. (See, Garborg—*Den ny-norske Sprog- og Nationalitets Bevægelse*. Chr. 1877.) Garborg is from Jæderen in Western Norway. He has from childhood had a thorough knowledge of Norwegian, as he is a peasant's son.² Garborg is a keen

² And what a guiding norm such a dialect really is, is brought home to us most strikingly when we who know a dialect examine the well

critic. He has the gift of making his opponents appear delightfully ridiculous. One deft little turn of phrase becomes a telling blow. He is a poet of the purest type, and his lyrics are among our best. (See, Garborg—*Haugtussa*.) He has given us our greatest analysis of the morbid states of the religious consciousness, (See, Garborg—*Fred*.) And his every thought is for Norway: Improve its agriculture, reduce emigration, establish a national language, produce a saner religious attitude, revive the national feeling. (See, Garborg—*Knudaheibrev*.) He represents the deepest and sanest and truest in our nation. He is the veritable incarnation of the spirit of the New Norway.³ And so Garborg joined the language movement with telling effect.

In the eighties there was started in the Storting an agitation for granting *Landsmaal* some rights in Norway. And now the uproar began as one can well imagine! It was asked: are you going to introduce this language in the schools? It is hard enough to teach the children one language, without getting one more to contend with. And if you make this jargon the principal language of any school, are you not doing infinite harm to the children? Are you not shutting them out from culture and future usefulness in any career among the educated classes of Norway? And how about the literature? How about Holberg, Wessel, Ibsen, Björnson? You are mad! Well, perhaps we are mad, it was answered; perhaps, indeed, we are. But one thing is certain: We want a language of our own, or, at least, we want the Danish in Norway to become more Norwegian. Now, Danish in Norway is not going to become more Norwegian by some occult process. No, it must be brought into contact with Norwegian so that the Norwegian vocabulary and the *Sprachgefühl* of the best linguistic districts may be brought to bear on it. Peasants are largely

meaning attempts of city-bred people to write *Landsmaal*. We catch them sinning against the spirit of the Norwegian language in every line. They are used to the *s*-possessive of Danish and make the most unfortunate blunders in the use of our dialectal phrasal possessives.

³ I shall elsewhere at a later time discuss more in detail the significance of Garborg's life-work.

ashamed of their language now. They affect a kind of Danish in the presence of city people and the cultured. We want to secure for the Norwegian dialects a better standing and recognition so that they may assert themselves more in the presence of the official language. And, moreover, we have had enough of our hyphenated existence: Politically we were Sweden hyphen Norway (Sweden-Norway), linguistically we are Denmark hyphen Norway! But there's no need for concern; Norway herself shall decide. Put *Landsmaal* to the test. Give it a chance. If it is not what is needed, it will die of itself. But the "cultured" continued to mock, the learned professors wrote long articles proving to their own satisfaction that no such language could long exist. A "paper-language"! Away with it! Look at your *Landsmaal*: Aasen uses one form, Fjærtøft another, and Vinje still another if not several. Bah!

It is true that there is a lack of strict uniformity in *Landsmaal*, but the same lack is found, though in a lesser degree, in Dano-Norwegian. Such a lack of uniformity, however, was part of the program of some of the language reformers, if not of all of them. Aasen's work was accepted as tentative. He located the gold mine and made the main shaft. Others must work too. Aasen's norm was in part accepted as something not absolutely definitive, but rather as a guiding principle which might indicate in a general way the direction in which the creation of a truly national speech for Norway ought to go. These reformers were themselves, and wanted others to be, profoundly influenced by their own particular dialects. In the moulding of the *Landsmaal* they wished to bring to it the wealth of the various dialects. This large treatment of the whole language question would, it was hoped, furnish an abundance of material from which usage could select the best as well as eliminate actual inconsistencies.

It must be admitted that *Landsmaal* was for a while rather chaotic. That was while Aasen's name did not have the commanding place it occupies now. Aasen's contemporaries found it harder to follow him than many of the present *Landsmaal* writers do. I suppose some jealousy entered in. If Ivar Aasen has a right to create a language for Norway,

why can't I, A. O. Vinje, do as much? Why, indeed! But Aasen was a genius in addition to having a large and sound linguistic knowledge. He was not so likely to be lost in contradictions of detail as were the other men who attempted to use in writing a language different from Danish. There is noticeable a decided return to Aasen's form in late years, and of course his norm is used in the schools. Aasen is the venerated name and unifying influence which is felt more and more. He takes to some extent the place of a tradition.

The fight has, however, not been a sheer waste of time and energy as so many Norwegian-Americans, most of whom have not given the matter serious thought or study, are inclined to think. It has led to a clearer idea of what is really Norwegian. When I went to school at home, I did not realize that teacher and preacher were teaching me a foreign language as if it were my mother tongue. I thought they spoke the right and proper language and that *my* dialect was something to be ashamed of. It was refined and educated to say *hjem*, but vulgar to say *heim*! A great thing has been gained by all the bitterness and struggle of the language fight. All Norwegians at the present time want the language to become more Norwegian. The Danish of Denmark has ceased to be the accepted standard for Norway. If the Danes change their spelling, we no longer feel in duty bound to go and do likewise. The center of Danish-Norwegian has become the Norwegian capital. We who prefer the *Landsmaal* look upon the cultured speech of our Norwegian capital as provincial Danish, that is, Danish with enough Norwegian in it to spoil it as Danish, and make it a parody on real Norwegian. The *Riksmaal* is no longer good Danish, far from it; I and thousands with me are compelled by our Norwegian language feeling to reject this language as an uncouth hybrid, containing Danish elements and Christianiaisms which grammatically are to us perfect monstrosities. I shall merely mention that most astounding form, the neuter plural indefinite: *huser*!

But the Danish of Denmark has less influence on Danish-Norwegian than formerly. Years back it used to be so that when there was a choice between a known Danish word and an equally well known Norwegian word, the Danish word was

given preference as a matter of course. The opposite is now true. The *Riksmåal* writers even go so far as to adopt an occasional word from their sworn enemy, the *Landsmaal*. Thus I come across words like *omsätning* for “oversättelse”, and *nävnd* for “komite”. But *Riksmåal*, so Danish in formative spirit and moulding power, has given to these words a Danish form. The more Norwegian and real *Landsmaal* forms are: *umsetjing* and *nemnd*. *Omsätning* and *nävnd* look like any other Danish words. There was a time—and not so very long ago either—when not a few of the most influential men of Norway considered it nothing short of crime to tamper with the Danish language, which they, of course, called Norwegian—in Norway. These men were purists to an extent unknown even in Denmark itself. They had the provincial’s slavish respect for the language of the mother country. An example: When certain spelling reforms were being discussed in Norway, it was seriously considered to invite the Danes to make the same changes so as to keep the language alike in both realms. These men who wanted to keep Danish pure and undefiled were called by both *Riksmåal* and *Landsmaal* reformers, the *Donomaniacs*. There was another group, and these were actual, positive language reformers, who endeavored to reform without breaking with Danish. Björnson, the great agitator, belonged to this school. The professorial light was furnished by K. Knudsen. This man devoted his whole life to the cause of three voiceless consonants. Knudsen advocated the introduction of the co-called hard consonants in place of the corresponding Danish soft series *b-d-g*. This change, by the way, took place by law in 1907, or rather, the law gave its formal sanction to what was already a fact in the pronunciation of Danish-Norwegian.

We had, then, in Norway until quite recently, three groups or divisions in the language struggle: The ultra-conservatives, who desired to let well enough alone; the reformers within the “church”, and lastly the “excommunicated” *Landsmaal* men. Aasen and his school considered Knudsen’s work utterly futile. K. Knudsen said: “Let us reform, but reform within the Danish, and then gradually work out a language which shall satisfy the patriotic feeling of all Nor-

wegians." Aasen said: "Let us once for all get a thoroughly and solidly Norwegian foundation for ulterior linguistic growth. Such retouching of Danish as Knudsen and others of his kind are doing does not produce Norwegian." Danish is a language of long standing and as such has definite laws of sound and syntax. It is able to shape, mould, trim, lop off, transform whatever comes into it. It takes a Norwegian masculine or feminine noun, "de-sexes" it, and makes it common gender. It normalizes the Norwegian words that are taken into it: *Nemnd* becomes "nävnd", *spildrande* becomes "spildrende." Aasen rightly maintained that Danish is so contrary to the spirit of the Norwegian dialects that it is well-nigh impossible to transfer into it their linguistic wealth. Aasen's idea was to give Norway a befitting receptacle into which the dialects could pour their valuable contributions.

All possible and impossible reasons have been urged against *Landsmaal*. You cannot thus create a language; one man cannot do this. The answer is: Not unless he happens to give direction and embodiment to the hopes and yearnings of a goodly number of his fellow-countrymen. The national and linguistic feeling of a growing number of Norwegians sanctions Aasen's work. I find that my Norwegian dialect approves *Landsmaal* in all its essentials. And the rapid, phenomenal progress of *Landsmaal* proves that it is not a Utopian impossibility.

Some have said: It would be impossible to obtain unity in such a manufactured language; there would be no central tradition to whip into line unruly writers and check individual tendencies to differences. This has been the favorite line of attack with Professor Johan Storm. He pointed out with gleeful satisfaction the differences and contradictions in the *Landsmaal* writers. He made his case unduly strong by dwelling fondly on real and imaginary differences and passing over in silence large and essential elements of perfect agreement. And if, perchance, he found it necessary to mention some uniformity, it was only to condemn this self-same uniformity as stagnation. He found nothing to praise and everything to blame. The lack of uniformity he called

chaos; the presence of it, compulsory stagnation. Death alone could make *Landsmaal* whole.

Again, some objected that this new language was essentially a rural speech, poor in everything but the words for the most common and vulgar needs of life. But the answer to this was long ago furnished by Aasen and others. The West Norwegian dialects are rich, surprisingly rich. The West Norwegian farmer is an all-around man if ever there was one. He has bits of forest, hence he has all the terms that go with the work of the woodsman. He is a fisherman and sea-farer and consequently he has the rich vocabularies of these occupations. He is also a tiller of the soil—what little soil there is among the splendid rocks that Nature has so lavishly bestowed upon our land. To be a farmer in Western Norway, where division of labor is just beginning to make its appearance, means to be a shoemaker, painter, blacksmith, boatbuilder, cabinet-maker, tanner, cooper and what not. Of course the man knows the words involved. All these Norwegian farm-houses are veritable factories where an astonishing variety of things are made. The women spin and knit and weave, dye the cloth, make the clothes, embroider. And one can imagine how far the vocabulary of a plain city person would reach when put into these surroundings! No, the linguistic poverty lies very often on the other side.

In these country dialects are found, moreover, a wealth of excellent expressions of ethical and moral significance. I realized this, as never before, this last year when I began to examine systematically the vocabulary of my own dialect. I found a great many truly excellent terms of other than mere bread and butter significance. A certain peasant woman recognized as many as thirteen thousand of the dialect words in Vidsteen's *Ordbog over Bygdemaalene i Søndhordland*. In addition she knew of course the Danish of church and school. The *Landsmaal*, then, drawing upon these dialects for its form and substance, being endowed with their strength and vitality and wonderful power of word-creation, has the possibilities of becoming one of the richest of modern cultural languages. Many of these possibilities have now been turned into actualities. *Landsmaal* in the hands of Arne Garborg,

Professor Haegstad, Professor Gjelsvik, Hans Seland, Lars Eskeland, Vetle Vislie, Jens Tvedt, Pastor Hognestad, is second to no other Scandinavian language in any sense whatever. The opponents of *Landsmaal* are beginning to realize its ability to cope with the best of languages. As a consequence we hear less about the unfitness of *Landsmaal* to be a bearer of modern cultural ideas. That supposed inability used to be the great argument of the "cultured", *Riksmaal* was spoken of by its defenders as *kultursproget*, as though people who do not know Danish are shut out from culture.

Much work has been done in *Landsmaal* by men who have made the vindication of Norwegian speech the chief aim and object of their lives. Professor Marius Haegstad, following close in the footsteps of Aasen, has evolved an excellent Norwegian grammatical terminology. Pastor Hognestad has worked out the language of the church. Prof. N. Gjelsvik has brought forth a powerful, clear legal vocabulary. Many scientists have disciplined and enriched our language in lecture room and laboratory. *Landsmaal*, in the hands of one who has studied it long enough to be competent to handle it, is fully on a par with Danish in its ability to express anything ranging from your first baby's wee cry to abstruse cogitations on Oriental Philosophy. And it is infinitely superior to Danish in poetic beauty, in richness of tone-color, in variety of musical effect. It fits the Norwegian temperament. It is terse, direct, lively to a degree that can scarcely be reached by the flat, monotone Danish. Those who now take up *Landsmaal* enter into the labors of many. The hardest task is over. *Landsmaal* has assumed its character to a large extent; it has its spirit, its moulding power, its classics. What it needs now to reach success is a grim determination to make no concessions whatsoever to Danish-Norwegian.

Again it is said that the children of the cities cannot understand *Landsmaal*; that it is as difficult for them to understand this language as it would be to understand Swedish. There is much truth in this statement. But, say the partisans of *Landsmaal*, you of the cities have for the greater part substituted Danish for Norwegian. We admit that Danish is essentially your mother tongue; that it is the language of

your mind and hearts. But more's the pity! You cannot help that you learnt Danish. You were not in sheltered nooks and valleys as we were, but lived in the centers of Danish influence where you were forced to learn Danish in order to transact business. Then it is objected that *Landsmaal* is essentially normalized West Norwegian. This objection is only partly true. East Norwegians themselves say that their dialects are one in spirit with *Landsmaal*. (See, Tov Flatin—*Flesbergmaalet*. Kongsberg, 1910. p. 3, and Sven Moren—*Austland og Vestland*.) In the lecture cited here which Sven Moren delivered at a national meeting of language reformers and others at Voss in 1908, we are told: "A 'West Norwegian language!'—you can imagine how strange such a term applied to *Landsmaal* appears to me who have grown up in the district farthest east, and who have built my Norwegian written language on the language spoken in my neighborhood. As far as I am concerned, the *Landsmaal* cannot be called a 'West Norwegian language'! *Landsmaal* is to me the most natural way of writing my own country dialect!"

But after all it must be admitted that *Landsmaal* has a decided West Norwegian appearance. And so it is asked by unpatriotic East Norwegians: "Why should we learn that language from the West, which is harder for us to learn than Danish?" But, of course, the Danish is called *Riksmaal*, our Norwegian language, in those regions, so when these people refuse to accept *Landsmaal*, they say: The choice is not between Norwegian and Danish but between your West Norwegian and our East Norwegian. Arne Garborg gave these people something to think about years ago. He wrote: It is impossible for a Norwegian to write Danish. He may learn to write German, or English, or French, and what he writes is called respectively German, or English, or French. But the minute a Norwegian attempts to write Danish, no matter how well he does the work, the result is—Norwegian. Now, it would seem reasonable to suppose that Norwegians, if they be Norwegians in the true sense, would prefer to learn a West Norwegian language rather than to continue the use of a language that was more or less forced upon the land in the days of national helplessness. Western Norway has infinitely more

to contribute toward a national speech than the Eastern lowlands where Swedish and Danish influence has been much more potent than in the distant regions of the west coast.

The charge that *Landsmaal* would shut out culture, Aasen answered long ago: "I shall likewise say that I have never had in mind to expel the ideas along with the words [Danish and other foreign words], as there surely could be found a way to keep alive the ideas even though the names were slightly changed." (*Skrifter i Samling*, p. 58).

Aasen considers those dialects best that are most like the Old Norse and that have the largest number of native words. The best system is to select a *norm* to guide one in the use of the dialect material.

I shall give here the following quotations from Aasen's *Skrifter i Samling*, Vol. III, p. 95, to show you his "laboratory" method of word selection. "One must necessarily have such a model form before him each time there is a question of determining the right form of a word which is different in the various dialects. When, for instance, we consider the word which in Danish is *lys*, and in Norwegian dialects *ljøs*, *ljös*, *lös*, *jøs*, *jös*, we find after closer examination that the right Norwegian form is *ljøs*." That is, Aasen selects the form that is the nearest to the Old Norse. His dictum is, "The Old Norse must be our guide in the essentials." (*i hovedsagen have det gamle sprog til mønster*.).

One cannot get a language that will conform to the details of all the dialects. "A few words would have a somewhat different shape in a normalized Norwegian form than the shape they now have in the different districts. Such a thing is unavoidable. But if the teaching of Norwegian were conducted with half the time and energy devoted to teaching Danish, the people would soon understand *Landsmaal* better than Danish." And here Aasen speaks from his heart of hearts: "The old inheritance is yet in existence, the rightful heirs likewise, and it is within their power to enter into the enjoyment of the inheritance and to repair it fully. And no outsider has a right to interfere." (*loc. cit.* vol. III, p. 104)

Aasen says that *Landsmaal* is more rich and melodious than Danish, in fact a beautiful language. But one must use

it with great care at first; it can easily be ruined in less competent hands. He who would reform a language cannot adopt everybody's ideas. Most people lack a clear outlook, a comprehensive understanding of the language itself and its relation to kindred tongues. If these very sane and sensible words of Aasen had been taken to heart by all the *Landsmaal* writers, we would have had less of the unfortunate confusion and contradictions that we find at present.

Let us here turn briefly to the work of K. Knudsen (1812-1895). Knudsen devoted his whole life to making the Danish used in Norway more Norwegian in sentence structure and vocabulary. He considered the form of the word, including the inflectional endings, as matters of less, even small, importance. His program is set forth clearly in his book, *Hvem skal vinne?* Chr. 1886. According to his view Danish is not a foreign language but the Danish version of the old common language of Scandinavia (*fällesmaalet*). Knudsen believes that Danish will gradually be influenced by Norwegian; he is himself trying to make it more "native". He has little or nothing to say in favor of the striking and genuine Norwegian element contained in the dialects. While the forms may be the same as those in the Danish language, the Norwegian language may have a spirit of its own, with certain differences in spelling. This ought, thinks he, to be sufficient to give Norway a national language! On page 73 we are told that "the language in Denmark is in reality the same as that of Norway, only in a different stage of development." By the same reasoning one could prove that Spanish is really not different from French, for French has in many cases passed through the Spanish stage of the words to get to its present form, even as Danish has passed through what is often yet the Norwegian forms. Knudsen's program for future linguistic endeavor (*främtdsmaalsträv*) is contained in the following quotation: "And now we come to the old differences between the two Norwegian languages, the questions concerning the feminine gender, the *a*'s and the diphthongs. Any other far-reaching traces of Danish we have not. Concerning these 'traces', I have above expressed the opinion that they will not prove themselves so altogether ineffaceable when we only

make our improvement along Danish-Norwegian lines, one by one and incidentally. The feminine gender is little by little gaining (*boka*—the book), *au-øy-ei* likewise, for the first in the root of the word: *Naut*, *graut*, *kaut*, *laus*, *løyse*, *bløyte*, *fløyte* (timber), *veik*, etc. Only let us not go too fast and antagonize the inhabitants of the cities.” (*Hvem skal vinne?* p. 168ff.). Knudsen rather condemns the ending *-het* (-hed), preferring the more Norwegian ending *-skap*. He uses such Norwegian words as *navngjetne*, *gnag*, *kapaat*, *spildrende* (*spildrande*), *en bate*, “advantage.” I cite the following as a sample of his Danish-Norwegian: “En annen sak var det, om de *hadde bygd* paa et enkelt *landskaps* maal, paa sönmörsk ti da *hadde de hat* et virkelig talt maal” (I have put the striking forms in italics.) Now, after all, this is good as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough in the direction of true Norwegian speech.

The chief ideas and methods of attack of Johan Storm may be found in the following books and articles: “Det Norske Maalsträv,” *Nordisk Tidskrift*. 1878 pp. 405-430 and 526-550. *Det nynorske Landsmaal*, Kb. 1888. *Landsmaalet som Kultursprog*, Chr. 1903.

The prevailing spirit in these publications is that of a man who is completely at home in Danish, who looks upon Danish, with slight changes of pronunciation, as his mother tongue, as the Norwegian national language. He dwells fondly on the difference between the East and West Norwegian. Aasen made the *Landsmaal* out of West Norwegian dialects. Why should the East Norwegians accept it? There is no place where *Landsmaal* is spoken. There is a lack of uniformity. Vinje had five different language forms from 1858 to 1870. Now he uses *boki*, now East Norwegian *boka*, now regular Telemarken language, now more the Aasen form. To make a language one must base it on some one living dialect. Storm shows us that the language which the Höyem brothers used was in the main their Thronhjem dialect. (Fjærtøft defended the right of the dialects as over against Aasen’s norm). Storm shows how Garborg and Mortenson use the so-called Midland form. He prophesies that greater confusion will follow later, when more districts become interested. He claims that forms

like *bokjo*, *bojo*, *boko*, *bogo*, *boki*, *boka*, *bokja*, will all clamor for recognition in the same capacity, feminine singular definite. Then he speaks of the difficulties of all types—feminine nouns, neuters, use of datives, the plural of verbs. He deplors the lack of the s-possessive although he well knows, as professor of Romance philology, that the Romance languages get along splendidly without any such form.

As to the *Riksmåal*; the one drawback to this language is that its tradition goes straight back to Copenhagen—the farther back, the more Danish it becomes. Its classics tend in a foreign direction. Holberg, Wessel, Welhaven, Björnson, Ibsen, all exert to a greater or less degree a Danish influence when used as classics in the school-room. *Riksmåal*, if it is to make good progress in the direction of Norwegian idioms and vocabulary, must partly renounce its tradition, its classics. *Riksmåal* has been called Danish so much, that just now it is very eager to prove how genuinely Norwegian it can be. But its ancestry and traditions are there. The *Landsmaal* writers have an easier task. They say, Björnson, Ibsen, Welhaven, etc., were Norwegians who wrote in Danish. We do not include them in our tradition, in our literature.

But the *Riksmåal* has become more Norwegian in sentence structure, idiom, vocabulary, and, to a limited extent, in the form of the words. Asbjørnsen and Moe, as I have said elsewhere in this article, wrote a language that is in spirit truly Norwegian. Björnson's peasant novels, though containing much Danish, have also many thoroughly Norwegian elements in the language. Ibsen, too, wrote well; *Peer Gynt*, for instance. I find in this play much that my dialect can sanction fully; many good Norwegian words and idioms. Of the current literature I shall merely mention the charming stories of Aanrud.

The opponents of *Landsmaal* have not always realized that the language movement, which came with the Romantic period in Norway and has lived through realism and naturalism, is rightly or wrongly a manifestation of the Norwegian *will to live*. If *Landsmaal* had been a mere fad, it would have been dead long ago. The *Landsmaal* movement has brought about as an indirect effect, a rapid change in Danish-Norwegian in

the direction of the spoken Norwegian. And *Riksmaal*, which seems so Danish to some of us, is in reality more Norwegian than we realize at times. In 1907 the hard consonants were introduced into *Riksmaal*. In place of saying or writing *pibe*, for *Landsmaal pipa*, Danish-Norwegian now writes *pipe*. Other examples are *bok* for *bog*, *sandhet* for *sandhed*. But this change, good as it is, does not distinguish it from Swedish. The Swedes have the hard consonants in the same places as the Danish-Norwegian now has them. What then distinguishes Norwegian most clearly from both Danish and Swedish? The old diphthongs. Norwegian says *stein*, *höy*, *blaut*, for Danish *sten*, *hö*, *blöd*. Other differences I shall not touch upon.

The present status of *Landsmaal* in Norway is briefly this: It is legally on a par with Danish-Norwegian. It is taught in every school in the realm. The people in each school district may decide which language shall be the principal one. By *principal* is meant the language in which instruction in written work is given. One language shall thus be the principal language, and the other one shall be taught so that the pupils may be able to read it readily. As regards the churches, the congregations may by vote decide which language shall be used in the services. The laws of Norway are published in both languages, and the records of the proceedings of the Norwegian Storting appear in both.

There are at the present time two main forms of *Landsmaal*. The first and by far the most important is that used by Haegstad, Liestöl, Gjelsvik, Jens Tvedt, Hans Seland and others. This is essentially the standard form of *Landsmaal* which is taught in the schools of Norway. This school norm is a modernized, toned-down form of Aasen's original *Landsmaal*. In my opinion, it is the form which with some changes will become the national language of Norway.

The form which is next in importance is that used by Arne Garborg for the last fifteen years. It is based on the Midland dialects of Norway—hence the name of *Midland* form of *Landsmaal*. One marked difference between this and the Aasen *Landsmaal* is that the Midland form has infinitives with long root syllables ending in *e* and with short root syllables ending in *a* (except a few words, as *sjaa*, *spy*, etc.),

whereas in Aasen's language all infinitives end in *-a* in harmony with most West Norwegian dialects.

A vast majority of periodicals and newspapers are yet in Danish-Norwegian. Many of them print articles in both languages, however. About twenty publications in all Norway are completely in *Landsmaal*, but most of them are small. This state of affairs has nothing surprising in it. The present journalists of Norway were to a man educated in schools that used Danish as the only language. A change for the better will come when those who are now being educated in *Landsmaal* grow up.

Four professors at the University use *Landsmaal* in their courses. These are Hægstad, Liestøl, Koht, and Gjelsvik. Several other professors are in favor of the movement, but have not as yet changed language. A majority of the public school teachers the country over are in favor of *Landsmaal*; about fifteen per cent of the school children are taught it as the principal language. Many teachers use it regularly in all their work, and many more lend the language their moral support. In certain Normal schools, Notodden, for example, only *Landsmaal* is used.

In the church the *Landsmaal* has made slow progress. About twenty years ago the poet-preacher Anders Hovden began to conduct services in it. At the present time some thirty pastors use *Landsmaal* occasionally or exclusively.

The young people of Norway are for the greater part in favor of *Landsmaal*. And herein lies the hope of the new speech. It has been well said that for every old person that dies, Danish-Norwegian loses a supporter, and it is hard to find one to take the place. The young peoples' societies of Norway—a national organization of about 40,000 members—are nearly all in favor of restoring the Norwegian language.

About 250,000 to 300,000 people now use *Landsmaal*. These are mostly outside the cities and in West Norway. The following figures regarding *Landsmaal* in the bishopric of Bergen may be of interest. And let me say here that this bishopric out of the six in Norway is beyond compare the best *Landsmaal* region. Out of 1,020 school districts, 756 were Danish-Norwegian, and 264 *Landsmaal*, in 1907. In 1911 the

same 1,020 school districts stood as follows: 480 were Danish-Norwegian, and 612 were *Landsmaal*. That is, *Landsmaal* gained 132 per cent in four years. (*See Yversyn yver Maalstoda i Bergens Bispedømme*, 1911, Aalesund, 1911.)

Norway has made progress. It has obtained political independence. Commerce is in a flourishing condition, emigration is decreasing, education is as good and abundant as in any other country. The national feeling is growing stronger. Fewer mothers are now glad to get their sons to America in time to escape the Norwegian military service, and fewer men are now so low in the scale of patriotism, as to be able to say that it matters little after all whether the Norwegians speak Norwegian or Danish. And, finally, Norway is well on the way toward acquiring a truly national speech; a speech that shall be the pride of all Norwegians; a speech that shall voice their joy and sorrow, their despair and hope, down through the years and years to come.

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